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Message Text

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47
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00

PA-01 RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-03 NSC-05 SS-15

/062 W
---------- 015895
R 231500Z DEC 74
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6710
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION UN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, YO, XH, BU, GR
SUBJECT: PRESS PRAISE FOR BALKAN DETENTE

REF: ATHENS 9038 AND ATHENS 8944

1. LEAD ARTICLE DECEMBER 22 IN KATHIMERINI HIGHLIGHTED MINIC VISIT, BASED ON GREEK DIPLOMATIC SOURCES, AS EVIDENCE OF STRONGER GREEK INITIATIVE LOOKING TOWARD GREATER COOPERATION AMONG BALKAN COUNTRIES. UNDER HEADING, "OPENING TO THE BALKANS", ARTICLE REPORTED "THIS DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE OF ATHENS" SERVES INTERNATIONAL DETENTE AND EUROPEAN SECURITY AND SHOULD BE FAVORABLY RECEIVED BY NATO AND WARSAW PACT.

2. THE FIRST PHASE OF THE GREEK INITIATIVE IS WARMING OF YUGOSLAV-GREEK AND BULGARIAN-GREEK RELATIONS. THE MINIC VISIT WAS REPRESENTED AS INVOLVING BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES, CLOSER
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EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES, FUTURE AND

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POSITIVE NEGOTIATIONS ON HANDLING OF YUGOSLAV TRADE VIA THESSALONIKI PORT, AND MUTUAL EXPLOITATION OF AXIOS RIVER. ON LATTER POINT KATHIMERINI REPORTED THAT LACK OF PROGRESS ON AXIOS RIVER PROJECT UNDERMINED UNDP PROSPECT OF SUPPORT BUT THAT ADEQUATE PROGRESS EXPECTED IN NEXT TWO MONTHS TO ADVANCE PROJECT. " IN ADDITION, PROSPECTS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE SEEN IN CONNECTION WITH NAVIGABILITY OF THE RIVER UP TO THE DANUBE MAINLY FOR TRANSPORTATION OF GOODS." OFFICIAL VISITS OF CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS TO BELGRADE SOMETIME IN 1975 AND OF BITSIOS TO BULGARIA IN JANUARY COMPLETE FIRST PHASE OF GREEK OPENING.

3. SECOND PHASE WILL FOCUS ON RESTORATION OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OF BALKAN PENINSULA, BEGINNING WITH ROMANIA. NEWS STORY USED SUBHEADLINE "TURKEY IN ISOLATION", BUT STORY ONLY VAGUELY NOTED THAT "TURKEY, WHICH IS IN ISOLATION, IS THE ONLY COUNTRY ABSENT FROM THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF INTER-BALKAN DETENTE."

4. COMMENT: KATHIMERINI'S LEAD ARTICLE PUTS POSITIVE FACE ON RECENT BILATERAL CONTACTS AND IS SOMEWHAT SELF-SERVING IN GIVING DIPLOMATIC CREDIT EXCLUSIVELY TO GREEK SIDE FOR NEW BALKAN EXCHANGES. REFERENCES TO TURKEY'S ISOLATION IN THIS CONTEXT, IMPLYING ITS OSTRACIZATION AMONG BALKAN GOVERNMENTS, SEEMS TO REPRESENT A GREEK VIEW WHICH OTHER BALKAN STATES MAY WELL NOT ENDORSE.
KUBISCH

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